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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION 25X1

1. Organization of the VPL

The following VPL headquarters were known in April 1954:
VDA headquarters at Cottbus airfield, post office box No 34, referred to as Object No I
Aeroclub No 600 at Cottbus airfield, referred to as Object III, with assigned 1st Bn No 600/1 and 2nd Bn No 600/2
Aeroclub No 700 at Drewitz airfield with assigned 1st Bn No 700/1 and 2nd Bn No 700/2
Aeroclub No 800 at Bautzen airfield with assigned 1st Bn No 800/1 at Kamenz, referred to as Object No II, and 2nd Bn No 800/2 at Bautzen-Litten
School of the VDA, numerical designation 500, at Kamenz, referred to as Object I, former designation: Air Technical School No 500
School No 501 at Pirna, subordinate to the school of the VDA at Kamenz, charged with the technical training of soldiers
School No 400 at Augustusbad, charged with the training of personnel for rear services; training courses for searchlight personnel and motor transport personnel
1st Tech Base No 301 at Cottbus
2nd Tech Base No 302 at Drewitz
3rd Tech Base No 303 at Bautzen
4th Tech Base No 304 at Kamenz
Guard battalion of the VDA Cottbus, referred to as Object No II, in former Funker Kaserne. 1

2. Organization of the VDA headquarters

Chief	Brigadier General Kessler (fnu)
chief of staff	Brigadier General Zorn (fnu)
chief of political department	Colonel Franke (fnu)
deputy chief	Lieutenant Colonel Schiel (fnu)

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assistants	Major Pstak (fnu) Captain Lorenz (fnu) Captain Koppitz (fnu) Captain Weiss (fnu)

Total personnel strength of political department: about 25 men.

Chief of engineer department	Colonel Kaiser (fnu)
deputy	Major Mewes (fnu)
assistants:	
in charge of weapons	Captain Scheeler (fnu) Captain Fritz (fnu)
in charge of repair and maintenance work	Captain Scheibe (fnu)
in charge of radio sets	Captain Heller (fnu)
in charge of airframes	Senior Lieutenant Krause (fnu)
in charge of aircraft engines	Senior Lieutenant Kuhlig (fnu)
in charge of equipment	Senior Lieutenant Schubert (fnu) Major Dr. Geisler (fnu)

Total personnel strength of engineer department: 12 to 15 men.

Chief of airfield construction department	Lieutenant Colonel Weikert (fnu)
deputy	Major Kunze (fnu)
assistants	Captain Schulz (fnu) Senior Lieutenant Noack (fnu) Senior Lieutenant Pertermann (fnu) Lieutenant Ross (fnu) Lieutenant Gaul (fnu)

Total personnel strength of airfield construction department: about 75 men, including about 25 civilians.

Chief or rear services department	Colonel Alter (fnu)
chief of staff	Major Baldamus (fnu)
political officer	Major Rosenbusch (fnu)
Assistants:	
in charge of organizational affairs	Captain Freier (fnu)
in charge of cadre matters	Senior Lieutenant Geier (fnu)
in charge of training	Senior Lieutenant Triller (fnu)
in charge of technical affairs	Major Skupin (fnu)
in charge of motor transport	Captain Korn (fnu)
in charge of supply	Major Dabarkow (fnu)
in charge of clothing and equipment	Senior Lieutenant Hagedorn (fnu)

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in charge of billeting affairs	Senior Lieutenant Mueller (fnu)
in charge of medical service	Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Steude (fnu)

Total personnel strength of rear services department: about 180 men, including civilians. The rear services department is the superior headquarters of the technical bases and of the school at Augustusbad.

Officer in charge of flight training	Colonel Lehwess-Litzmann (fnu

The departmental chiefs also are deputies to the chief VDA in their specific fields. As deputies they rank as brigadier generals. The chief of the VDA ranks as general and the chief of staff as brigadier general. The officer in charge of flight training is not a departmental chief.

Chief of training department	Colonel Schroeter (fnu)
deputy	Lieutenant Colonel Ulm (fnu)
assistants:	
in charge of flight training	Sub-Lieutenant Draxdorf (fnu)
in charge of general training	Captain Nowak (fnu)
in charge of tactics	Major Weith (fnu)
in charge of athletics	Captain Kroke (fnu)
in charge of statistics	Senior Lieutenant Wolf (fnu)
in charge of instruction	Captain Dettmann (fnu)
in charge of parachute training	Major Dowidath (fnu)

Total personnel strength of training department: about 21 men.

Chief of operations department	Lieutenant Colonel Sommerfeld (fnu)
deputy	Captain Leiblein (fnu)
assistants	Senior Lieutenant Kuehn (fnu) Senior Lieutenant Krajewski (fnu) Senior Lieutenant Martin (fnu) Senior Lieutenant Heinze (fnu)

Total personnel strength of operations department: about 10 men.

Chief of organization department	Captain Radon (fnu)
deputy	Captain Beesler (fnu)

Total personnel strength of organization department: about 6 men.

Chief of signal department	Major Wagner (fnu)
deputy	Major Walter (fnu)

chief of meteorological sub-department	Captain Neuber (fnu)

Total personnel strength of signal department: about 26 men, including 16 assigned to meteorological sub-department.

Chief of cadre department	Lieutenant Colonel Barthels (fnu)
deputy	Major Hertel (fnu)
assistants	Major Kraehmer (fnu) Major Weiss (fnu) Captain Schmerter (fnu)

Total personnel strength of cadre department: about 18 men.

Chief of finance department	Lieutenant Colonel Baumbach (fnu)

Total personnel strength of finance department: about 5 men.

Chief of supply department	Lieutenant Colonel Schwarz (fnu)
deputy	Lieutenant Klinge (fnu)

Total personnel strength of supply department: about 14 men.

The VDA headquarters had a total personnel strength of about 285 officers, 60 NCOs and EM, and about 50 civilians. 2

3. Total Personnel Strength of VDA

The units subordinate to the VDA had the following personnel strength in March 1954:

VDA headquarters	395
3 Aeroclubs, each about 650 men	1.950
4 technical bases, each about 400 men	1.600
schools	1.800
guard battalions	400
Total	6.145

The personnel of an Aeroclub is composed as follows:

headquarters	4 pilots and 60 administrative personnel
1st Bn	36 pilots, 210 technical personnel, 40 administrative personnel
2nd Bn	36 pilots, 180 technical personnel, 40 administrative personnel

The technical personnel of the headquarters of the Aeroclub are administratively assigned to the 1st Bn. Each battalion consists of 3 squadrons and each squadron has 12 pilots.

4. Aeroclub No 600 at Cottbus

Chief	Captain Raatz (fnu)
chief of staff	Lieutenant Colonel Bitterlich (fnu)
officer in charge of flight training	Senior Lieutenant Schmidt (fnu)
officer in charge of cadre section	Senior Lieutenant Koehnen (fnu)

According to the table of organization, the following officers also belong to the headquarters:

Political officer
technical officer
chief of operations department and deputy chief of staff
chief of organization department
chief of training in firing
chief navigator
officer in charge of parachute training

Total personnel strength of the headquarters of an Aeroclub: about 25 officers and 38 NCOs and EM.

Chief of 1st Bn	Lieutenant Rietschel (fnu)
deputy political officer	Captain Rotho (fnu)
officer in charge of flight training	Lieutenant Mattheus (fnu)

According to the table of organization, the following officers also belong to the headquarters of the 1st Bn:

Chief engineer
chief physician
chief of operations department
officer in charge of cadre section
chief of organization department
chief navigator
chief of staff

Squadron commanders:

1st Squad	Lieutenant Schmidt (fnu)
2nd Squad	Senior Lieutenant Reuter (fnu)
3rd Squad	Lieutenant Wiese (fnu)

The pilots of the 2nd Bn were trained in the USSR between August 1952 and November 1953. No detailed information is available on this battalion as it was not yet completely organized by April 1953.

5. Aeroclub No 700 in Drewitz

The following personnel of the Aeroclub No 700 in Drewitz were known:

Chief	Captain Reinhold (fnu)
chief of staff	Captain Zehl (fnu)
political officer	Major Kiessing (fnu)

chief of operations department	Senior Lieutenant Reichelt (fnu)
chief of 1st Bn	Captain Knoeppel (fnu)

6. Aeroclub No 800 in Bautzen

The following personnel of the Aeroclub No 800 in Bautzen were known:

Chief	Lieutenant Colonel Wilpert (fnu)
chief of 1st Bn	Captain Zieris (fnu)

The commanders of the Aeroclubs were scheduled to rank as brigadier generals. 3

The technical personnel of the individual squadrons were to rank as follows:

chief technician	lieutenant
technician	sub-lieutenant
mechanic	NCO

7. Soviet Advisers

The Soviet Army had detached the following advisers to the VDA headquarters:

chief adviser
political adviser
adviser in training matters
adviser in parachute matters
adviser in signal affairs
adviser in engineer matters
medical adviser

The chief adviser was Colonel Chuganov (fnu). The names of the other advisers were not known. All of the advisers were pilots.

8. Technical Manuals

The following technical manuals were used by the units of the VDA:

Causes of dangerous flight attitudes and their elimination.
Instructions for pilots operating Yak-11s.
Air traffic regulations.
Practical meteorology for pilots.
Instructions for pilots operating Yak-18s.
Aerobatics with Yak-18s.
Flying through clouds with fighter aircraft.
The training of student pilots.
Air-to-air and air-to-ground firing. 4

9. Service Colors

The personnel of the VDA wore the following service colors:

Officers.
Flying personnel: light blue collar patches with golden wings, yellow-bordered light blue epaulets.

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Technical personnel: light blue collar patches with silver wings, white-bordered light blue epaulets.

Administrative personnel: light blue collar patches without wings, white-bordered light blue epaulets.

NCOs and EM.

Light blue epaulets with or without wings and light blue epaulets without border.

10. Equipment with Aircraft

Each Aeroclub was equipped with 11 Yak-18s, 11 Yak-11s, and 1 AN-2. The Yak-18s which were painted olive drab were assigned to the 1st Bn and the Yak-11s with a light blue paint were assigned to the 2nd Bn. Yak-18 No 09 and Yak-11s [redacted] were observed with the Aeroclub in Cottbus. After May 1954, the aircraft strength of the VDA was to be increased to 180 Yak-11s and 120 Yak-18s. The aircraft arrived from the USSR by rail and were assembled by the technical personnel of the individual battalions. Repair work on aircraft was also done by this technical personnel. Each Aeroclub was scheduled to be equipped with a mobile repair shop which, however, was not yet available. Aircraft engines of model M 11 F R and A 21, spare parts, tail units, wings etc. were stored in the central supply depot in Goerlitz. Requests for such accessories were handed in by the individual units via the Department of the Rear Services. The AN 2-type aircraft which were scheduled to be used for parachute training of the pilots have been employed only as courier aircraft.

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11. Weapons and Instruments on Aircraft

Each Yak-11 was equipped with a machine gun fitted in the left upper section of the engine cowling for firing through the propeller disk. All aircraft weapons were dismantled from the aircraft and stored in the central ordnance depot of the Aeroclubs. Each aircraft was equipped with a radio transmitter and receiver, a radio compass (Radio-Halbkompass) and navigational and safety devices. The Yak-11 was additionally equipped with a camera gun (Photo-Maschinengewehr) with a control camera for the sighting mechanism; during firing practices, the control camera automatically checks the position of the mirror reflex sight. Seat-type parachutes were loaned out by Soviet units and stored in the parachute depots of the individual Aeroclubs. Parachute troops were trained by Soviet instructors. As no towers for the drying of parachutes were available, the parachutes had not been folded and packed since September 1952.

12. Armament and Ammunition

Small arms: model 28 light machine guns
model 41 submachine guns
model 44 carbines
model FN 9 and TT 30 pistols

All of the arms were stored in the central ordnance depot of the technical bases from where they were issued on request to the individual battalions and squadrons. The number of small arms available did not meet requirements. Ammunition was stored in

ammunition bunkers. No bombs were available. The establishment of a general ammunition depot in the Gorgast Fort, along the Berlin-Kuestrin road was under consideration. The fort was inspected by officers of the Department of the Rear Services during the spring of 1954. 5

13. Equipment of Technical Bases with Motor Vehicles

The motor transport company of the individual technical bases was equipped with the following motor vehicles:

3 ZIS mobile flight control station
1 ZIS truck with hoisting gear
2 ZIS and Phaenomen-type fire trucks
2 tank trucks with trailers
1 Molotov-type oil truck
3 or 4 ambulances
3 Horch-type command cars
2 RSB and RAV-type radio trucks
several trucks, tractors and caterpillar tractors.

Repair on motor vehicles was done by the individual motor transport companies. The fuel dumps at the airfields were subordinate to the technical base. Fuel and lubricants were supplied by the Department of Rear Services. A supply depot for air technical equipment at the airfield, an oxygen station, a compressed-air station and a battery charging station were assigned to each technical base. Motor vehicle numbers observed included sedan [redacted] 25X1

[redacted]

14. Instruction Equipment. 25X1

The battalions of the Aeroclubs were equipped with a sufficient number of charts and models for instruction on fluid mechanics, navigation, aircraft and aircraft engine theory, and the theoretical instruction on flying. A link-trainer was under development. Aerial gunnery training sets of model STL 2 were manufactured by the Zeiss Plant in Altenburg.

15. Training Program During the Winter Period from December 1953 to April 1954

The following training was conducted:

Practice flights: at least 52 hours, at most 72 hours

Practice flights on Yak-18s and Yak-11s:

Local flights	12	hours
aerobatics	10	"
instrument flights	6	"
cross-country flights	10	"
flying in elements of two	10	"
air attack exercises	4	" (only with Yak-11s)

Instruction: about 376 hours

political indoctrination	110	hours
tactics	30	"

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aircraft engines	15 hours
airframes	15 "
radio sets on aircraft	15 "
aircraft armament	20 "
aircraft instruments	15 "
navigation	10 "
meteorology	8 "
aerodynamics	15 "
military basic training	14 "
athletics	20 "
topography	10 "
first aid	5 "
Russian language	38 "
radio communications	10 "

16. Flight Training

The order for flying activity was issued by the operations chief of the Aeroclub, confirmed by the commander of the Aeroclub, and then transmitted to the commanding officer of the battalion involved. The briefing of the flying personnel of the unit concerned took place on the preceding day at 1800 under the command of the chief of the unit. The flight schedule was turned in by the units to the chief adviser of the VDA headquarters on the day preceding the air activity. It was discussed with the deputy commander in charge of flight training and then handed over to the Soviet Air Army in Werder. This headquarters gave the permission for the scheduled air activity. When Soviet units flew in the air space of the VPL, the VPL aircraft were confirmed to local flying.

Just before air activity was started, the aircraft were warmed up by the technicians on the aprons in front of the hangars. Then the aircraft were taken over by the pilots. While the aircraft was taxying to the take-off point, the orders were transmitted by radio. Before air activity began, the pilots were inspected by a physician.

a. Local flights. These flights were made at an altitude of about 200 meters. Landings were required to be spot landings if at all possible. When the aircraft approached the landing cross at an altitude of about 100 meters, the mobile flight control station ordered the aircraft by radio to go around again. Each local flight lasted about 6 minutes.

b. Aerobatics. During the first 30 minutes, the trainee flew with the trainer and flew right and left banks at 60 and 90 degrees, left and right rolls, double rolls, and Immelmann turns. During the next flight of 30 minutes, the trainee was instructed by the trainer in advanced aerobatics including normal loops and inverted loops, spinning to the left and right, not more than two revolutions, subsequently emergency landings in glide flights while the flight instructor throttled the gas. These aerobatics were finally made in solo flight by the trainee under the supervision of the squadron commander for a duration of 30 minutes to 35 minutes. During these aerial maneuvers the aircraft were not allowed to fly higher than 1,500 meters.

c. Instrument Flights. The trainee practiced with the trainer for 45 minutes at an altitude of 1,500 meters. The curtains of the trainee's cockpit were lowered. The take-offs and landings were made by the trainer.

d. Cross-Country Flights. Five cross-country flights of about 80 minutes' duration were made with the trainer. Then, the trainee made an examination flight of the same duration. The Cottbus-Kamens-Bautzen-Cottbus route or vice versa was generally flown without intermediate landings. The second aircraft took off for the cross-country flight when the first aircraft was flying over the next airfield. The flights were made at an altitude of at least 2,000 meters. The ceiling was not more than 3/10 overcast and visibility not under 25 km. The aircraft was in radio communication only with the ground radio station of the home field.

e. Formation Flying. During the practice flights, the leading aircraft was manned by the trainer and trainees, while the second aircraft of the element was only occupied by one trainee. The take-offs were made individually. The aircraft at the right side of the element flew about 50 meters from the other plane and slightly to the rear with its engine in line with the tail unit of the leading aircraft. Each formation flight lasted 80 to 90 minutes. The flight altitude was between 1,800 and 2,200 meters.

f. Air Attack Exercises. These flights were only made with a trainer on the Yak-11 aircraft.

17. Instruction on Air Tactics

a. Support of ground troops by fighter aircraft: Time schedule for the support of attacks or the defense of ground troops. Points of main effort. Employment of fighter as ground attack aircraft in the battle zone. Co-operation with artillery. Deception maneuvers.

b. Joined commitment of fighter and ground attack units: Protection of ground attack aircraft by fighters in battle zones. Close co-operation between commanders of fighter and ground attack units.

c. Employment of fighters as ground attack aircraft prior to the employment of light and medium bomber units in the enemy area near the front line: Attacks by fighters with weapons and bombs at enemy fighter airfields. Dropping of bombs and firing with aircraft armament at radar stations and air reporting stations.

d. Fighter escort for bomber units: When formations of bomber aircraft and piston-engine aircraft are escorted by jet fighters, the fighter formation circles over the bomber formation. Advance fighter elements fly 5 to 10 km ahead of the formation for reconnaissance purpose. A smaller element of the fighter unit flies under the bomber formation. When jet bombers are escorted by jet fighters, an advance fighter

element flies about 3 km ahead of the bomber formation. Additional elements of the fighter unit fly at the right and left sides of the bombers at the same altitude, while another element flies in the rear and over the bomber formation. The number of fighters employed depends on the number of bombers. The commanding officer of the bomber unit maintains radio connection with the commander of the fighter unit using the frequency of fighter units.

18. Political Indoctrination and Security Measures

All ranks up to major received political indoctrination for 2 hours every Monday and for 1 hour every Saturday. The individual departments of the headquarters were given a 30-minute briefing on press reports every morning. The generals, colonels and lieutenant colonels were given political indoctrination and instruction on specific subjects on 3 consecutive days each month. This training was also attended by all commanding officers and political officers of the Aeroclubs. The Political Department was responsible for the political indoctrination of all members of the VDA headquarters. The officers of the Political Department were also charged with supervising the instruction methods and the active participation of the subordinate units. After completion of training periods, intermediate examinations were held for all ranks. About 60 percent of the personnel of the VDA headquarters were considered followers of the Communist party line. The continuous changes in training procedures and other plans had an unfavorable effect on the morale of the personnel.

19. Training in the USSR

The pilot training course, which was held in the USSR near the Don River between August 1952 and November 1953, was originally scheduled to last 2 years. It was discontinued as the training with jet aircraft was cancelled. During the course, 21 of the about 200 students were replaced because of physical unfitness. The students in the USSR reached the same status of flight training as the VPL pilots in East Germany but were given a more intensive theoretical training. No other training course was scheduled to be held in the USSR. No observations were made indicating the resumption of training with jet aircraft.[6] It was learned that a pilot school instead of an Aeroclub was to be established at Kamenz airfield.

1. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] The re-organization of the VPL after December 1953 which has previously been reported by other sources is confirmed by the present report. For layout sketch of the billeting area of Cottbus airfield and quartering facilities of VDA headquarters, Aeroclub No 600 and Technical Base No 301, see Annex. 25X1

2. [redacted] Comment. This first detailed information on the organization of the VDA headquarters appears credible. The officer in charge of air training probably exercises the functions of an inspector. 25X1

25X1

3. [redacted] Comment. The information that the commanding officers of the individual Aeroclubs are scheduled to rank as brigadier generals indicates that the Aeroclub is similar to an air division.

25X1

4. [redacted] Comment. The list of manuals does not include manuals on training activity with MiG-15s. The theoretical instruction on this aircraft type was discontinued on 17 June 1953.

25X1

5. [redacted] Comment. The Gorgast Fort is included in the list of KVP installations. It has not been determined, however, whether the fort will be used by the army or air force units of the KVP or by both branches of service.

25X1

6. [redacted] Comment. The pin-point location in the USSR of the training installations for VPL pilots has not been determined. Airfields near Podolsk and Minsk have been mentioned. It is possible that training courses were held at several locations. It is assumed that only a total of about 180 pilots were trained in the USSR.

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[redacted]

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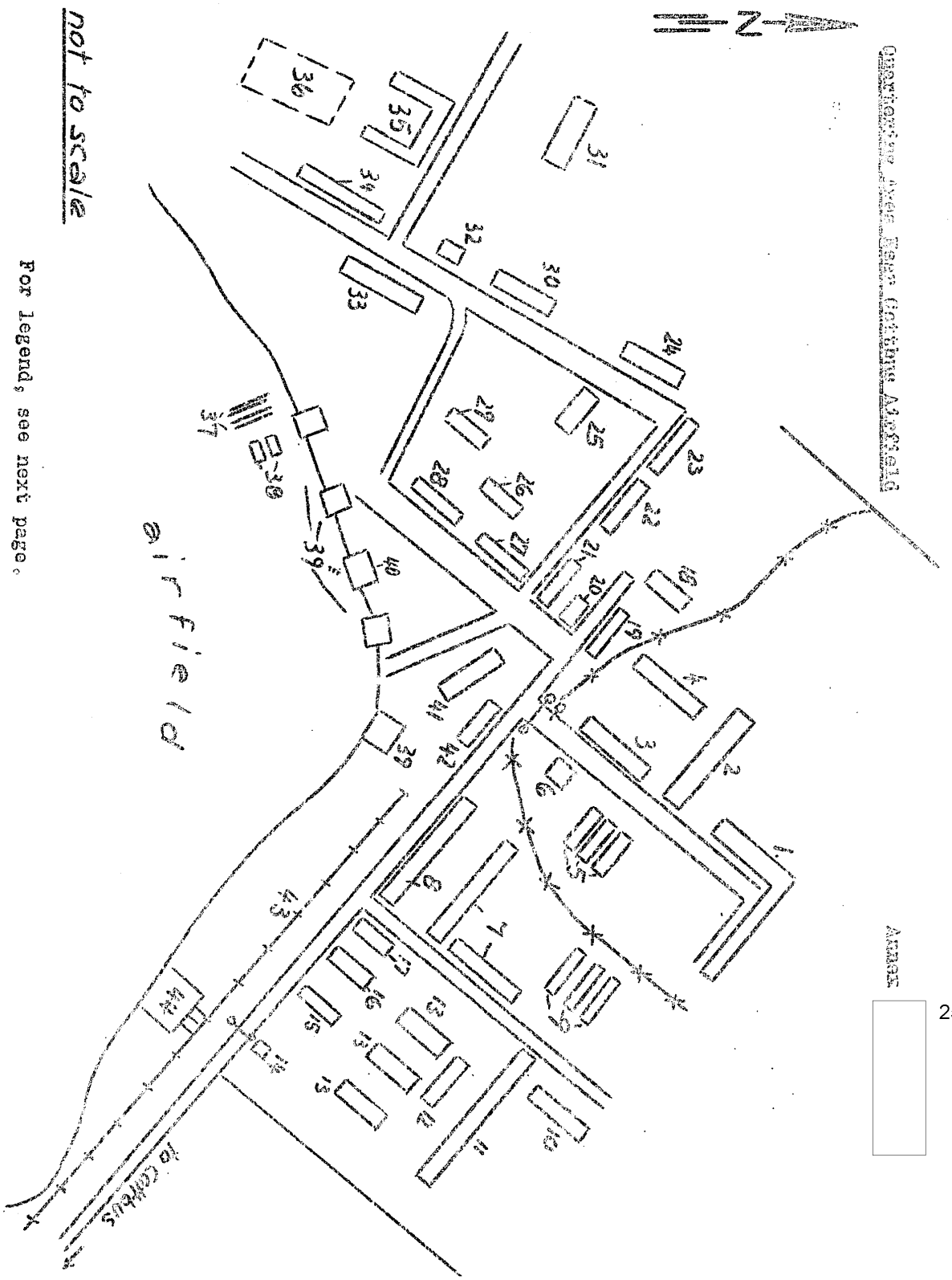
not to scale



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Legend.

Quartering Area Near Cottbus Airfield

Object I, occupied by VDA

1 Block 1
2 Block 2
3 Block 3
4 Block 4
5 Temporary buildings
6 Guardhouse

Object III, occupied by Aeroclub Cottbus and Technical Base

7 Destroyed buildings
8 Fire department
9 Temporary buildings
10 Garages
11 Garages
12 Kitchen
13 Quartering facilities for 1st Tech Base
14 Sentry box
15 Dispensary
16 Headquarters building of 1st Tech Base
17 Guardhouse
18 Quartering facilities for female members of VP
19 Building occupied by Trade Organization (Handelsorganisation) (HO)
20 Guardhouse
21 Kitchen
22 Aeroclub No 600
23 Classrooms
24 Kitchen of flying personnel
25 Aeroclub No 600
26 1st and 2nd Bns of Aeroclub
27 Building occupied by HO
28 Quarters for flying personnel
29 Quarters for technical personnel of 2nd Bn
30 Quarters for 1st Bn
31 Hospital
32 Switchboard
33 Building occupied by headquarters of Aeroclub No 600
34 Building occupied by headquarters of 1st and 2nd Bns
35 Kitchen for technical personnel
36 Athletic grounds
37 Firing range for small-caliber arms
38 Battery charging station and oxygen station
39 Hangars
40 Flight control station
41 Gymnasium
42 Heating plant
43 Spur track
44 Fuel dump